

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF NEW YORK

JEFFERY HAMM,

Plaintiff,

-against-

CITY UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK; HERBERT
H. LEHMAN COLLEGE; OFFICE OF
STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES,

Defendants.

ORDER DIRECTING PAYMENT OF
FEES OR AMENDED IFP FOR
RELEASED PRISONER

20-CV-2876 (CM)

COLLEEN McMAHON, Chief United States District Judge:

Plaintiff proceeds *pro se* and was detained in the North Infirmery Command on Rikers Island when he filed this action. A plaintiff who qualifies under the Prison Litigation Reform Act (PLRA) as a prisoner when he files a complaint faces certain restrictions.¹ See *Gibson v. City Municipality of N.Y.*, 692 F.3d 198, 201 (2d Cir. 2012) (“[T]he relevant time at which a person must be ‘a prisoner’ within the meaning of the PLRA in order for the Act’s restrictions to apply is ‘the moment the plaintiff files his complaint.’”) (citation omitted). A prisoner proceeding *in forma pauperis* (IFP), for example: (1) must pay the \$350.00 filing fee in installments withdrawn from his prison trust fund account, 28 U.S.C. § 1915(b)(1), and (2) can be disqualified from proceeding IFP, that is, without prepaying the filing fee, if he has previously filed three federal civil actions (or appeals), while he was a prisoner, that were dismissed as frivolous, malicious, or

¹ Under the PLRA, a prisoner is “any person incarcerated or detained in any facility who is accused of, convicted of, sentenced for, or adjudicated delinquent for, violations of criminal law or the terms and conditions of parole, probation, pretrial release, or [a] diversionary program.” 28 U.S.C. § 1915(h).

for failure to state a claim on which relief may be granted, 28 U.S.C. § 1915(g) (the “three strikes” rule).²

Plaintiff did not pay the relevant filing fee to commence this action, but before the Court resolved Plaintiff’s request to proceed IFP, a search on the New York City Department of Correction website revealed that Plaintiff is no longer in custody. Upon a prisoner’s release, “his obligation to pay fees is to be determined, like any non-prisoner, solely by whether he qualifies for [IFP] status.” *McGann v. Comm’r of Social Security*, 96 F.3d 28, 30 (1996). “A released prisoner may litigate without further prepayment of fees upon satisfying the poverty affidavit requirement applicable to all non-prisoners.” *Id.*

Because Plaintiff is no longer in the custody of the New York City Department of Correction, his financial situation may have changed. The Court therefore directs that if Plaintiff wishes to prosecute this action and proceed IFP, he must submit an amended IFP application within thirty days. Alternatively, Plaintiff may prepay \$400.00 in relevant fees, which includes the \$350.00 filing fee and a \$50.00 administrative fee that applies to litigants who are not proceeding IFP. If Plaintiff fails to comply with this order within the time allowed, the action will be dismissed for failure to comply with this order, without prejudice to Plaintiff’s refiling the action.

Even if Plaintiff’s release means that he “may litigate without further prepayment of fees,” *id.*, his release does not change the fact that if he qualified as a prisoner at the time that he filed this action, then dismissal of this action for failure to state a claim, or as frivolous or malicious, could qualify as a strike for purposes of § 1915(g).

² A plaintiff who was a prisoner at the time of filing the complaint is also required to have exhausted prison grievance remedies, 28 U.S.C. § 1997e(a).

Plaintiff must notify the Court in writing if his address changes, and the Court may dismiss the action if Plaintiff fails to do so. Under Rule 41(b) of the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure, a district court may dismiss an action *sua sponte* for failure to prosecute after notifying the plaintiff. *LeSane v. Hall's Sec. Analyst, Inc.*, 239 F.3d 206, 209 (2d Cir. 2001); *see Fields v. Beem*, No. 13-CV-0005 (GTS)(DEP), 2013 WL 3872834, at *2 (N.D.N.Y. July 24, 2013) (“A plaintiff is required to notify the Court when his address changes, and failure to do so is sufficient to justify dismissal of a plaintiff’s complaint.”) (collecting cases).

CONCLUSION

The Clerk of Court is directed to mail a copy of this order to Plaintiff at 2265 Bathgate Avenue, Apt. 3A, Bronx, New York 10457, the address listed on page 2 of the complaint, and note service on the docket. The Clerk of Court is further directed to include a change of address form with this mailing. Within thirty days of the date of this order, Plaintiff must either pay the \$400.00 in fees that are required to file a civil action in this Court or submit an amended IFP application. If Plaintiff submits the amended IFP application, it should be labeled with docket number 20-CV-2876 (CM). Plaintiff must also notify the Court of all updates to his address of record.

No summons shall issue at this time. If Plaintiff fails to comply with this order within the time allowed, the action will be dismissed for failure to comply with this order, without prejudice to Plaintiff’s refiling it.

The Court certifies under 28 U.S.C. § 1915(a)(3) that any appeal from this order would not be taken in good faith, and therefore IFP status is denied for the purpose of an appeal. *Cf.*

Coppedge v. United States, 369 U.S. 438, 444-45 (1962) (holding that appellant demonstrates good faith when seeking review of a nonfrivolous issue).

SO ORDERED.

Dated: April 30, 2020
New York, New York

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Colleen McMahon", is written over a horizontal line.

COLLEEN McMAHON
Chief United States District Judge

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF NEW YORK

(full name of the plaintiff or petitioner applying (each person
must submit a separate application))

-against-

CV _____ () ()

(Provide docket number, if available; if filing this with
your complaint, you will not yet have a docket number.)

(full name(s) of the defendant(s)/respondent(s))

AMENDED APPLICATION TO PROCEED WITHOUT PREPAYING FEES OR COSTS

I am a plaintiff/petitioner in this case and declare that I am unable to pay the costs of these proceedings and I believe that I am entitled to the relief requested in this action. In support of this application to proceed *in forma pauperis* (IFP) (without prepaying fees or costs), I declare that the responses below are true:

1. Are you incarcerated? ☐ Yes ☐ No (If "No," go to Question 2.)

I am being held at: _____

Do you receive any payment from this institution? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Monthly amount: _____

If I am a prisoner, *see* 28 U.S.C. § 1915(h), I have attached to this document a "Prisoner Authorization" directing the facility where I am incarcerated to deduct the filing fee from my account in installments and to send to the Court certified copies of my account statements for the past six months. *See* 28 U.S.C. § 1915(a)(2), (b). I understand that this means that I will be required to pay the full filing fee.

2. Are you presently employed? ☐ Yes ☐ No

If "yes," my employer's name and address are: _____

Gross monthly pay or wages: _____

If "no," what was your last date of employment? _____

Gross monthly wages at the time: _____

3. In addition to your income stated above (which you should not repeat here), have you or anyone else living at the same residence as you received more than \$200 in the past 12 months from any of the following sources? Check all that apply.

(a) Business, profession, or other self-employment	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
(b) Rent payments, interest, or dividends	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No

- | | | |
|---|------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| (c) Pension, annuity, or life insurance payments | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| (d) Disability or worker's compensation payments | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| (e) Gifts or inheritances | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| (f) Any other public benefits (unemployment, social security, food stamps, veteran's, etc.) | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| (g) Any other sources | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |

If you answered "Yes" to any question above, describe below or on separate pages each source of money and state the amount that you received and what you expect to receive in the future.

If you answered "No" to all of the questions above, explain how you are paying your expenses:

4. How much money do you have in cash or in a checking, savings, or inmate account?

5. Do you own any automobile, real estate, stock, bond, security, trust, jewelry, art work, or other financial instrument or thing of value, including any item of value held in someone else's name? If so, describe the property and its approximate value:

6. Do you have any housing, transportation, utilities, or loan payments, or other regular monthly expenses? If so, describe and provide the amount of the monthly expense:

7. List all people who are dependent on you for support, your relationship with each person, and how much you contribute to their support (only provide initials for minors under 18):

8. Do you have any debts or financial obligations not described above? If so, describe the amounts owed and to whom they are payable:

Declaration: I declare under penalty of perjury that the above information is true. I understand that a false statement may result in a dismissal of my claims.

Dated

Signature

Name (Last, First, MI)

Prison Identification # (if incarcerated)

Address

City

State

Zip Code

Telephone Number

E-mail Address (if available)

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF NEW YORK

(List the full name(s) of the plaintiff(s)/petitioner(s).)

____ CV ____ (____)(____)

-against-

NOTICE OF CHANGE OF
ADDRESS

(List the full name(s) of the defendant(s)/respondent(s).)

I hereby notify the Court that my address has changed to the following:

Date

Signature

Name (Last, First, MI)

Prison Identification # (if incarcerated)

Address

City

State

Zip Code

Telephone Number

E-mail Address (if available)